THE TWO SALOMES.

XII.

THE MOTHER.

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When Mrs. Gerry heard these interrogations she did not reply immediately, and her face changed indescribably. She glanced at her companion, and met Mrs. Darrah's eyes fixed upon her. Had those eyes been merely probing and inquisitive she could have braced herself coldly, and have put on an armor which might have essentially aided her in this interview. But unexpectedly she encountered an expression of sympathy and gentleness, and the mother's whole attitude changed from that of defence to something quite different. As for Mrs. Darrah, she could not explain to herself why this woman's strong, controlled face should so modify what she might have called her professional curiosity into something human, something which had little to do with the novel which was forming itself in her mind, though she still felt indefinitely that she might probably come upon some rather rich "material."

As the silence continued, Mrs. Darrah said in a "I am always so deeply interested in grand- voice not much above a murmur: parents. Once in a while a person runs upon such strange things in grandparents."

Mrs. Gerry did not speak. That she was thinking deeply and painfully was apparent. When she had met that look of sympathy from her hostess the New-England woman felt it a distinct relief to cease from holding herself in such a stiff mental attitude.

It seemed to her that she was aware of a reaction from the alertness and the care that she had constantly exercised since she had left her home with her daughter. And, curiously, at the same time also she was conscious that she feared the approach of some new and as yet entirely unformed care. She was not in the least given to vagaries or superstitions, however. She could have smiled at herself that Mrs. Darrah's sympathy should so quickly seem to weaken her.

She sat upright in her chair, in strong contrast to the lounging figure opposite her.

"Before I reply to you, Mrs. Darrah," she said, "I want you to tell me what has suggested such questions to you."

"Why, your daughter, of course; who else?" was the prompt response. "Don't you know that she is not a usual kind of a girl?"

Mrs. Gerry could not help an uneasy movement.

"I see that you don't like that," went on Mrs. Darrah. "Like all upright, conventional natures, you distrust the unusual."

"Yes, I do," emphatically.

"And yet," reflectively, "it is to the being out of the ordinary that the world owes its greatest debts."

No response to this remark. Mrs. Darrah opened one of her notebooks, saying as she did so:

"But we are straying from the subject of grandparents."

"They were not all New-England people," said Mrs. Gerry with abrupt precision. "There was one exception. That was my grandfather, my mother's father. Of the rest there is absolutely nothing to say, for they were the common country folks in one of our villages up home."

Mrs. Gerry pressed her hands together quietly but closely upon her lap.

Mrs. Darrah took a position removed from her cushions. Her eyes sparkled with interest. But there was a marked expression of kindness upon her face.

"Please don't think me hard and disagreeable," she said, "but you can't imagine how interesting this is. I quite reckoned upon the unusual one in your daughter's ancestry. Miss Gerry is so contradictory."

Mrs. Gerry's hands gripped each other more closely than before.

"Have you notice it, too?" she asked. "Then it certainly must be true. I have continually told myself that it was my fancy. What do you think it is, Mrs. Darrah? Perhaps it will be a relief to talk to you. Has Salome said anything very strange? Oh, tell me what is in your mind! The child has such a—such an expression sometimes come to her face. I can't describe it."

"Try to describe it," said Mrs. Darrah eagerly.

A sombre kind of smile passed over Mrs. Gerry's lips as she met her companion's glance. But she felt that it was safe to go on. The genuineness in the writer's character had decidedly risen to the surface to meet the same quality in this woman. Besides, it was not until this moment that Mrs. Gerry had what she would have called a "realizing sense" of the strain and the anxiety in every way which had been upon her since she had left her home. Almost the only human beings with whom she could speak, save Salome, were Job Maine and his wife. And she did not write of any anxieties to her husband. She had never put any burdens on him which she could bear alone. Though she had not really spoken it in words to herself, yet none the less she had all her married life acted upon the knowledge that she must bear trials by herself all that she could; that she was better fitted to bear trials than Lyman was. And now as she sat in this richly appointed room and was dimly conscious of the approach of a trouble in some strange new guise, with a thrill of faithful and protecting love she thought:

"I must keep it from Lyman; I must bear it myself."

"Tell me about it," repeated Mrs. Darrah. "I know I make novels, and I like to get odd facts; but, Mrs. Gerry, I do believe it will do you good to talk freely with me."

"I believe it will," said Mrs. Gerry.

She drew a long breath. She was thinking that she had not known she was so tired. And then she had a vivid sensation of thankfulness that her daughter was better. Whatever happened, Salome was better. At this she grew more cheerful.

"It's all done with long ago," she said, "and it's only because you have been kind that I'm willing to tell you. My mother's father was not an American; he was what we used to call an 'outlandish man.' He was born in Martinique, but his parents were Spanish. I saw him only a few times; he died when I was a child. I remember well his large eyes and his curious, dark skin. My mother was the only child, and she did not resemble him in the least—everybody said so—she was clear Ware, like her mother. She was a real Puritan girl. Salome used to look just like her grandmother, and she had that kind of a conscience that is always fretting and wondering, and making the owner of it afraid that he or she doesn't do just right. That was my mother. Salome has her features now. But somehow she doesn't look like her any more. I don't quite understand it. But then, perhaps, Mrs. Darrah, it is not necessary that we should understand everything."

Mrs. Gerry paused. She smiled rather sorrowfully and wistfully. She was wondering if this woman, who must be wise, since she wrote books which were printed, could not say something to help her.

When Salome had had what the doctors called incipient phthisis, her mother had not felt nearly so helpless as she did now when there seemed to be nothing the matter with the girl, and she was happy.

"Whether it be necessary or not, we can't understand everything," responded Mrs. Darrah quickly. "But we can try. What kind of a person was this Martinique gentleman?"

"I don't think he was a gentleman at all," was the answer; "at least, he was not what I call a gentleman. I think of him now as I thought of him as I used to see him when I was a little thing. I loved him with a kind of ardent fondness, though he was a withered old man. That is, he seemed very old to me. I could have believed he was a hundred—any age. I used to plead to sit on his knee. I would stare into his eyes, which were so soft and so dark. They were as different from any eyes I knew anything about as if they were not human eyes. He was only an animal. But no"—Mrs. Gerry paused here so long that she apparently forgot that she had been talking, and that some one was listening. But Mrs. Darrah was patient. She sat with a notebook in her lap and a pencil in her hand. But she had at this moment no thought of writing.

The warm air blew in through the open windows and stirred the drapery of the room. Somewhere in the court a woman was singing something of which only the piercing high note was audible. More and more Mrs. Gerry felt that it was a relief to her to speak. It often happens that to a stranger one may unseal what to one's kin would remain forever closed.

"How strange children are!" she now suddenly exclaimed. "I remember one day the minister called. I was a small thing in a long 'tire' to cover my new pink calico frock. I was picking over blackberries, and was sitting on a stool in the kitchen with a dish on each side of me, one for the good berries and one for the poor. It was hot, so hot that the perspiration kept gathering on my face, and I kept putting up the back of my hand to wipe it off. We were going to have bread and milk for supper, for mother said she would not make a fire for fear there would be a thunder tempest. There were thunder-heads rolling up all the time in the west.

"Grandfather was lying on the grass. He was perfectly happy. He said it was an awful climate, and it was only on such days as these that he thought it was warm enough. He would lie in the sun for hours and hours. If I came near him he would fondle me. I used to know even then that he did not always tell the truth. I had discovered that about him. I hardly knew what to think of it. You know, Mrs. Darrah, that to the old-fashioned, average child such as I was, to tell the bald truth was as necessary to life as it was to breathe."

Mrs. Gerry looked at her companion, who nodded quickly.

"My mother was like an incarnation of truth," went on Mrs. Gerry. "I told you she was a real Ware. And she was conscientious to a painful degree. But she loved her father, I really think, better than anything else in the world. And he was so lovable—so lovable. Everybody, everything loved him, Mrs. Darrah. But you couldn't trust him; he had no principle; he wasn't upright. And he was so kind; his heart was so gentle; he had such a way with him; and he loved so, Mrs. Darrah—" here Mrs. Gerry suddenly left her chair and stood upright. But she made no gesture. Her eyes burned in her controlled face.

"How do you account for such things?"

"My dear Mrs. Gerry," was the response, "we don't account for them."

"But we ought—we ought," replied the other. "You know it isn't right to love a man or woman of that kind."

"They talk about loving the sinner but hating the sin," remarked Mrs. Darrah with an incredulous smile.

"I know that. But we can't do it. We can't do it. The minister spoke about that on that afternoon. He spoke in the most general way, as ministers often do. But he liked my grandfather; I really think he loved him. I know he broke down and cried, and couldn't go on with his remarks when he tried to attend grandfather's funeral."

Here Mrs. Gerry ceased speaking and resumed her seat.

Mrs. Darrah quoted in a half whisper those lines:

"There's many a purer and many a better,
But more loved, oh, how few, love!"

"It is really astonishing and depressing that we should be able to explain so little," she went on. "It isn't goodness; in short, we have no more idea now what makes a person inspire so much love than they had in pre-Adamite days, when I imagine they never asked, and never cared. I wish we did not ask and did not care—since there is no answer—absolutely no answer."

The woman spoke with an intensity of emphasis that showed that she was thinking of something in her own past.

After a moment she glanced at Mrs. Gerry, who was sitting with one hand over her eyes.

"I suppose your grandmother loved that man?" she said.

Mrs. Gerry looked up.

"Yes, yes. You can imagine. And, Mrs. Darrah, it must be a horrible, horrible thing to love what we don't approve. But she loved him from the first. We never knew how he happened to stray into our village. It was haymaking time. They were short of hands. This fellow came walking along one hot day with a violin under his arm. He said he would like to work. They took him, just for the haymaking. I don't think he would have stayed any longer, only he saw her, you know. She was a fair, prim little thing, with blue eyes and ash-colored hair. They say he was wild with love for her. And she, no one could reason with her in the least, from the very first. She had a will. She said she should run away and marry him if they opposed her. They knew she would do it. So they gave up opposition. And he won upon them all, too. But how could they approve of him? And they never knew anything about him—what he was, or where he came from—only what he told; and he did not always tell precisely the same stories. And how he would play on the fiddle! Strange tunes that made your heart beat and melt, and that took your breath away from you."

Mrs. Gerry paused again. She spoke in a kind of spasmodic way, as the memories came to her.

"Oh, how you interest me!" murmured Mrs. Darrah.

But Mrs. Gerry did not appear to hear her. Her mind was in the past.

"How did it come out?" inquired Mrs. Darrah.

"Come out? Oh, she married him. But how was she going to live with a love so at odds with her nature and her upbringing? She could not stop loving him, and she could not approve of him. When my mother was born she gave up the fight and died—and she died in her husband's arms. And she died telling him that no woman ever loved a man as she loved him."

"But he lived; he lived," said Mrs. Darrah bitterly. "Yes; life wasn't over for him."

"They thought it was over for a long time. But, as you say, he lived. And he loved his little daughter in a way that made some of the people wonder. He was still a young man. You might have thought he would have grown to have other interests. But he never looked at another woman. He came to be one of the regular objects of the village, he and his child, for he always had her with him. She grew up just like her mother. She never told a lie, or prevaricated. But she knew that he did both. He couldn't be trusted. I'm sure he would have stolen, or forged, or embezzled, only he was indolent; he embarked in no schemes, and his wife's father let him and his child live with his family. All summer he basked out of doors. He said we didn't know how to live. It was life to let the sun soak through and through you, and not to care so about right and wrong. Things would take care of themselves.

"How many times I have heard him say, with his slow, sweet smile: 'Things will take care of themselves.' I didn't know what he meant then. I know well enough now."

Mrs. Gerry came to another pause.

She turned to the woman opposite her. The reticent, solitary mother seemed impelled to speak out.

"Can you imagine how I have watched my daughter?" she exclaimed. "And more than that—how I have tried to conceal that I watched her. Not even my husband has ever suspected that I did so, and I would hardly acknowledge it to myself.

"But she was always such a good child! I thought she was too conscientious. I almost distrusted that part of her as morbid. She was morbid. She was never a strong child. She seems well now, really well. You can have no idea how I used to watch her. When I grew older I understood what the minister said that hot day to my mother. He said something about heredity. I wondered what that word meant. And he hoped that only the gentle traits would be transmitted. My mother almost groaned as she replied that she hoped so. That it would kill her, it would kill my father if any child of his should inherit—there I lost what she said. I know well enough now what it was. And I know that I did not inherit.

"Sometimes, in the midst of that sickly kind of regard for conscience, Salome would say a word or two that would make a shudder go over me. That word or two made me fear that her conscience was morbidly, not healthily alive. But she is such a good girl! and she has such a tender heart! And she is so well now—and so happy!

"Mrs. Darrah, I insist upon your telling me why you wanted to ask me these questions about grandparents." Here the speaker smiled slightly. "What has the child been saying?"

Mrs. Gerry's face was set in a determination to be answered.

Mrs. Darrah took up a notebook and began turning its leaves. The simply bred country woman would be no match for the woman of the world in any demand like that.

"Well," replied the other easily, "she hasn't said much. A few things about the folly of being in a state of resistance all the time—things which my niece might have proclaimed a dozen times and I should hardly have listened. But you are aware that Miss Gerry is a different person from my niece. She is excessively interesting, as all contradictory natures are. And her face—really, if I were a young man I should be in love with her; and, being in love, I should be driven into a score of desperate moods every twenty-four hours, because her face would tell me—good heavens!—what wouldn't her face tell me?"

Mrs. Darrah ended in a voice of undisguised enthusiasm. But the mother's features grew almost rigid.

"Is that the way she affects you?" she asked.

"That is the way she affects me," was the answer.

"And I have always distrusted everything that was not easily read," responded the other. "I distrust such things now."

And silently Mrs. Gerry cried out:

"Oh, what is best for my child?"

Perhaps Mrs. Darrah had never been more deeply moved to pity than by this woman, who would never have asked for pity from any one; this woman who had always been the one upon whom people leaned, who helped people.

If the mother knew what her daughter had done—worse than that; if the mother knew the serenity of her daughter's mind concerning what she had done—these were the words which were going through Mrs. Darrah's consciousness as she looked up at the figure before her.

The trained observation of the author took in every detail of that figure, which, in its unadorned outline, was like a visible symbol of absolute, transparent integrity.

"She would grieve to death," was Mrs. Darrah's conclusion, and in her thought she added: "If it were twenty times the sum I would shield the child."

Aloud she said in answer to the mother's remark:

"There's where we make a mistake—in distrusting what we don't understand. If people couldn't understand us, we would not wish to be condemned, perhaps, by reason of their stupidity."

Mrs. Gerry looked relieved.

"That is true; that is Christian," she said.

"Certainly it is," lightly, "and now it strikes me that we are two old wiseacres who are doubting the ways of Providence. Let us talk of something cheerful—love, for instance. That beautiful youth whom they called Antinous—he has been discriminating enough to fall in love with your daughter, instead of with my niece. Tell me about it. It is quite appropriate. Of course she loves him?"

"Yes." As Mrs. Gerry replied her face lightened, as faces were likely to do when their owners thought of young Moore.

"Now that is pleasant to think of; therefore let us think of it."

But Mrs. Gerry made no response. She could not keep her mind upon Moore.

She turned and picked up the black straw bonnet with its black ribbon bow upon it. She held it thoughtfully in her hands a moment, her worn, anxious face softening. She looked up. Then she advanced and held out her hand, which Mrs. Darrah took and cordially retained.

"It's curious how I have talked to you," Mrs. Gerry said after a short silence, during which the two women gazed at each other. "I don't think I've talked so to anybody else in the world. Any of my folks would have been frightened. They'd have thought Salome was—why, some kind of a criminal, I suppose. But you—you haven't been shocked. You have done me a great deal of good."

There came a very lovely light into the woman's eyes as she went on:

"I didn't know before how—how good it might be to speak out so. I never do speak out. It isn't my way. I can't seem to do it. But it does relieve one, doesn't it?—if it is to the right person."

There was a naivete in the women's voice and manner which appealed to her hostess and made her grasp the hard, brown hand still more closely as she rose from among her cushions.

"You self-contained creatures," she said, "always take life in such a hard way. You lock things up in your own souls. Now my advice to you is never have a thing locked up in your own soul. Tell everything. Talk of everything. You have no idea what an airy, light, care-free kind of a sensation will be yours. It's like letting breeze and sunlight into a close room. Try it, you close, reticent Yankee woman."

Mrs. Gerry smiled.

"I have tried it, and I am better already," she said.

"And don't worry because your daughter is a mixed creature, a Yankee and a heat-loving creole, and what not. She must live out her life, as we must live ours. If ours goes in a straight line—well, how much thanks to us for that?"

"But I want Salome to be good!" cried her mother out of a full heart.

"And happy," supplemented the other.

"And happy," repeated Mrs. Gerry. "And now I must go. How strangely I have talked to you," she repeated. "Goodby."

"Goodby, and be sure you don't try to understand everything."

"I shall be sure I can't understand, anyway, try or not," and Mrs. Gerry walked away from the hotel, beginning her journey back to the truck farm without even glancing out across the water, or at the old fort, or up at the sky which was now bending at its very loveliest over the old city.

She trudged along, her parasol held at exactly the right angle, her face straight forward, and gradually growing red with the heat.

Half way through the palmetto she saw some one sitting at the root of a pine with head thrown back, hat off and rings of hair blowing about her forehead. It was Salome. She did not rise as she saw her mother; she smiled and waved her hand. And when her mother had come still nearer she reached forward and grasped a fold of her skirt, saying:

"Sit down here with me. You look so tired, and I am so rested—come. There, that is right. Now you are obeying me as you ought. Put your head on my shoulder for a moment. You are always resting me some way; now let us turn about."

Yielding to the gently compelling gesture, Mrs. Gerry leaned her head on the girl's shoulder, and the girl looked down at her with a smile that was so intensely happy that it almost alarmed the woman who saw it, for she felt that, as she would have phrased it, "it was not natural to be so happy as that."

"I thought it was time for you," said Salome, speaking in a kind of murmur. "I've been sitting here a long time; not that it seemed long, you know. I'm not sure that I should ever want to leave here. Don't you think, mother, that there is any kind of animal that lives entirely on Southern air and 'Southern sunshine'?"

"I never heard of such a creature," was the reply.

"But there must be, don't you think?" went on the girl. "And that's what I should be if the talk about reincarnation were true and I could have my choice. When I die I should like to come back as some live thing that could always be in tropical sunlight; could always hear the hot wind in the tops of trees and the warm ocean coming against heated sands."

Salome's eyes met her mother's as she ceased speaking. Mrs. Gerry had raised her head. She was startled and terrified at the look of languor and of fire in the child's glance. And then she asked herself why she should be terrified? Was it abnormal that the young, susceptible nature should be so moved by its environment, by the flow of renewed life?

Salome threw her arm over her mother's neck.

"Don't look so frightened," she said, "I don't believe in reincarnation. I'm perfectly orthodox, I suppose. But really, mother, shouldn't you think a tiger, for instance, 'burning bright,' would be very happy?"

"No, I shouldn't," with great decision.

Salome laughed gently. She kissed her mother's cheek.

"Oh, what a Northern woman you are," she exclaimed. And then after a pause, "But I shall never be a Northern woman again."

"What do you mean?" sharply.

"I mean that I would not live North; I couldn't," shuddering. "Do you think I would go back there after having been under such a sky as this? Look up into the heavens, mother. Oh, life is worth living here. Only I'm afraid I shall love life too well. Do you think I shall? Tell me, do you think I shall?"

"It is natural and proper to love life," Mrs. Gerry replied, somewhat primly. She felt that her child was getting away from her in some way. She wanted to reach out frantically after her, but she could not.

"Natural and proper!" repeated the girl. "I begin to think that I am unnatural and improper. But I can't be really wrong, since you are my mother," with another caress. "Only, you see, I can't even imagine that I could live North again. I did not live there. I hated it."

"But in the summer," began Mrs. Gerry—"think how it would be here in the summer."

"Yes; I have thought," replied the girl. "It would be hot—hot. It would be delightful. And I suppose I should never cough again. I should always be as well as I am now. I was never well before in my life. I was only a 'little more comfortable,' or 'not quite so comfortable.' You and father will have to move down here. Father might have an orange grove on the Indian River, or he might learn of Mr. Maine how to raise truck."

Salome laughed again at this last thought, and her mother smiled faintly.

"And what about Mr. Moore?" asked the elder woman. "Have you told him?"

"Not yet. But I shall tell him. He must arrange some way. I've been thinking that we must all live on the Gulf coast. They say it is cold here sometimes, after Christmas. And I will never, never endure the cold again. It is like death to be cold."

Salome was now leaning back against the tree. The two did not speak for a long time. Mrs. Gerry was trying to rest, and at the same time she was trying to cast out of her mind the formless fears which invaded it. She was continually telling herself that she need not be anxious about the fancies of an imaginative girl. But the fact which gripped her hard and relentlessly was the fact that she herself had never been in the least as Salome was now. She had never had that nature; she could not understand it; she had to own, with a sick feeling which was worst of all, that she was repelled by it. However sympathetic we may be, what we have not felt, what we cannot feel, remains forever beyond the pale of our sympathy; beyond our judgment. And then love becomes a torture. It was a torture at this moment to Mrs. Gerry. She could not understand; but her love for her child was so keen and so strong that it seemed to her that God would not be so cruel as not to give her understanding of her daughter's heart. She felt as if she were thrust out, not by Salome's will, but by a bitter and inexorable something for which no one was responsible.

These events, these combinations for which no one is responsible, how unbearable they seem sometimes!

After a few moments Mrs. Gerry began to tell how kind Mrs. Darrah had been, and how relieved they would all be that Uncle John could be paid.

Salome, with her head against the tree, watched her mother with interest. She was thinking all the time of the check she had signed, and she was telling herself that she was perfectly positive that it was wrong for her to have done that. Yes, she knew it was wrong; but she wondered why she did not feel that it was an evil thing to do. She had no feeling whatever in that direction. But she knew. She knew how the wind blew over the snowbanks at home in midwinter, but she did not feel it, and she meant never again to feel it. What was the use?"

An impulse to explain to her mother came to her. It was difficult to think that Mrs. Gerry could feel differently from what she herself felt.

"Of course I shall tell her some time," she thought. "But I will wait. She will be grieved; and why should I grieve her? But how lovely everything has come out! If I had waited I might not have been in time with that money. I wonder what Portia would say to what I have done? Portia is not so particular about her conscience as mother is, or as mother used to teach me to be. I must tell Portia."

The day was already ended when the two women left their place by the tree. The sun had gone down in a red sky; the flat stretch of country lay in a warm calm under the rapidly growing moonlight. The birds were flying in the long, blue spaces toward the west. The frogs were croaking.

The two walked on hand in hand.

"There is only one thing about living here," Salome was saying, "one thing which is not so pleasant, I mean."

She swung her mother's hand back and forth as she spoke. She was smiling, but her eyes were slightly anxious.

"Two things, I should say," responded Mrs. Gerry, who had now fully resumed her cheerfulness, "and they are Mr. Job Maine and Mrs. Job Maine."

"But they are one," was the retort, "don't you know? And she married him for love. I don't mean them. I mean the crows, mother."

Mrs. Gerry turned and looked full in the girl's face.

"The crows?"

"Yes; they will sometimes fly over my head, and between me and the lovely blue sky. I wish they wouldn't."

THEY DID NOT VALUE ENGLISH BANK NOTES.

"In my wanderings around the globe," remarked the traveller, "I was once made commandant of a place called Anamaboe, on the west coast of Africa, some twenty miles east of Cape Coast Castle. Among my other duties was that of chief magistrate, and I held jurisdiction over some 6,000 Fantis. The usual cases were those of petty larceny of ground provisions, the penalty being a short imprisonment and a sound flogging. One day there was a more serious charge. John Addo, the leading merchant of the place, charged his clerk with having robbed him of £80. Addo had shipped palm oil to a Manchester firm, and not receiving the money, had got his clerk to write again demanding payment. Addo himself could neither read nor write, and therefore had to leave all his correspondence to his clerk, who was a negro from Sierra Leone, where he had been educated. The clerk had been arrested on suspicion, as in the reply to the second demand for the money the English house had written back saying it had already sent the money. I examined the letters that had passed between the people. In the first letter from Manchester the arrival of the palm oil was acknowledged, and notice was given that the sum of £80 was remitted therewith. The clerk indignantly denied the charge, but his master had evidently not received the money.

"Before the next hearing I had sent my own clerk thoroughly to overhaul all Addo's papers, but not a trace could be found of the missing draft. At the second cross-examination of the prisoner I asked him if there was not an inclosure in the first letter. He admitted that there were some scraps of paper in it, but as they had nothing to do with the letter he had thrown them among the waste paper and they were probably in the heap in the yard still. I did not believe the man, but to give him every chance ordered a search of the rubbish and went down to superintend it myself, taking the prisoner along with me. It was not long before a bundle of £5 Bank of England notes came to view. Nobody knew the value of them, but when I showed them to the prisoner he recognized them as the scraps of paper he had thrown aside. There they were, sixteen crisp uns, which the man in his ignorance had thrown aside. I discharged the man at once, but it was not until I had paid eighty golden sovereigns to John Addo that he was satisfied that he had not been robbed. He, his clerk and the whole community were astonished to think that pieces of paper were worth so much money."

HE DIDN'T EXPECT TO RECOVER HIS MONEY.

If vice flares out in the midnight hours, "when," says Superintendent Byrnes, "all good citizens should be in bed," virtue may also shine then. There twinkled out in the darkness of the early morning, a few days ago, a good deed of a sort almost as rare as Biela's comet, and perhaps more worthy of being chronicled than was the alleged appearance of that celestial wanderer, since perceptible and tangible effect resulted from it. Four night-workers on one of the big papers were mounting the steps of the Bridge, hastening toward Brooklyn, the serene and slumber-locked haven of the weary, when one cried out: "Hold on a minute," and went back to the lower entrance. The others waited perforce, for it was five minutes before train time. The fourth man soon rejoined them, his face expressing something like bewilderment. "Do you fellows want to see an honest man?" he demanded. "Yes," they answered. "Then go back and take a look at the ticket-seller. Two mornings ago, at just about this hour, I was rushing for a train and had to buy tickets. Having no change, I threw down a dollar bill, seized the bundle of tickets and just caught the train. In the afternoon I felt in my pocket for some silver, and found none. Then I realized that I had forgotten to wait for my change at the Bridge. I mentally charged up the missing cash to profit and loss, but concluded that, just for my own satisfaction, I would make inquiry about it. So I asked the ticket-seller just now if he remembered the incident.

"'Are you the man?' he replied. 'Here's your money, sir,' plumping down seventy-five cents, and adding: 'I called after you the other night, and the policeman shouted after you, but you did not turn around.' I thanked him heartily, more pleased at his straightforwardness than at getting my money back. That man is worthy of a better place. In all my experience of petty cases of errors in small change, this is the first time justice has been voluntarily done me," and the speaker's companions agreed with him that the incident was, in its way, noteworthy.

A VERY HORSEY MISSION.

SIR GERALD PORTAL'S EXPEDITION TO UGANDI.

Sir Gerald Portal's expedition to Uganda may be described as the very horsiest diplomatic mission ever sent out by the British Government, and his staff seems to have been composed more with regard to sport than to politics. Sir Gerald himself is a crack polo player, who, during my stay at Cairo, used generally to officiate as captain of the victorious team out at the polo grounds of Gezireh, while his elder brother, Captain Melville Portal, and Colonel Rhodes, are equally distinguished as adepts at this game. Captain Portal is the famous quarter-mile runner of Balliol College, Oxford, who won the interuniversity quarter

SIR GERALD PORTAL.

in 1879. All three men are considerably over six feet in height and broad in proportion, the remaining members of the mission, namely, Consul Berkeley and Lieutenant Arthur, of the Rifle Brigade, are also very tall men, the only short member of the staff being little Major "Roddy" Owen. The latter is the foremost gentleman rider on the English turf, and only the other day carried off the blue ribbon at the Grand National. The Major, I may add, has of late become a great favorite in the Marlborough House set, and owes to the influence of the Prince, as much as anything else, his appointment as a member of the mission. I do not know either Mr. Berkeley or Lieutenant Arthur personally, but I hear that they are both renowned for their prowess at Gymkhana meetings, Mr. Berkeley being especially noted for the time which he is able to make in a hurdle race while carrying a large number of eggs. Colonel Rhodes is an officer of the 1st Royal Dragoons, and has recently been acting as military secretary of the Governor of Bombay. The latter is Lord Harris, the well-known cricketer, and Colonel Rhodes, who is a brother of the Prime Minister of Cape Colony, is quite as distinguished a cricketer as his late chief.

Sir Gerald Portal is one of the luckiest and most popular officers of the British diplomatic service, and is the youngest member either of the Order of the Bath or of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, being barely thirty years of age. Within a few months after joining the diplomatic service he found an opportunity of distinguishing himself at Alexandria, where, as an attache of the English Envoy, Sir Edward Malet, during the bombardment, and the subsequent Anglo-Egyptian war, he displayed considerable gallantry, discretion and zeal, so much so, that at the close of the operations he received both the British war medal and the Khedival bronze star. Subsequently he acted as third, and then as second, secretary of the British Mission at Cairo, and became a great favorite of the Envoy, Sir Evelyn Baring, who has since become Lord Cromer. When, therefore, it became necessary to send a mission to King John of Abyssinia, Lord Cromer at once put forward the name of young Portal. Accompanied only by a subaltern officer of the 20th Hussars, he set out on his adventurous journey from the Red Sea coast to the camp of the Abyssinian King in the highlands, and although he failed in the object of the mission, the presence and resource of mind, the endurance and the courage which he displayed, were such that on his return he was decorated by the Queen with the Order of the Bath. Among the amusing features of this trip was the fact that he was presented on his arrival at the royal camp, by King John, with a robe of honor made out of some material which he himself had brought to Abyssinia among the presents of the British Government for the King, and which had been stolen from him on his way up the country by some of the King's followers.

A year or two afterward he was appointed to the duty of temporarily replacing Sir Charles Euan Smith as Consul-General and diplomatic agent at Zanzibar, and made such good use of his time there that he succeeded in getting the Sultan to enact a law abolishing slavery. This, of course, won for him the favor of the powerful and influential Anti-Slavery Society in England, and when, shortly afterward, Sir Charles was promoted to the rank of Minister to Morocco, both the Government and the public were unanimous in designating Portal as the man best fitted to act as his successor. Accordingly, he was appointed Consul-General and diplomatic agent, with a salary of some $15,000 a year, besides numerous allowances.

Within a year of his appointment he negotiated the subjection of the Zanzibar Sultanate to a British protectorate, as a reward for which he received from the Queen the honor of knighthood and the Star of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. He is now not only Consul-General at Zanzibar, but also British High Commissioner for all the northeastern part of English Africa, having an immense number of consuls, vice-consuls and deputy commissioners under his orders. Indeed his government is as vast and as extensive as that of one of the great Indian presidencies, and he administers it with wonderful judgment and skill. What new honors are in store for him if he brings his present mission to Uganda to a successful close it is impossible to say, but the future of a man who already, at the age of thirty, has won the honor of knighthood, of an independent diplomatic post, and of a satrapy as important and extensive as that possessed by "Gerry" Portal, is brilliant in the extreme.

A younger son of Mr. Melville Portal, of Laverstoke House, Overton, who is one of the most popular county magnates of Hampshire, and of Lady Charlotte Portal, a daughter of the late Earl of Minto, Sir Gerald is married to Lady Alice Bertie, daughter of the seventh Earl of Abingdon. One of his brothers, I may add, is in the navy, and was present during the engagement of the British cruiser Shah with the Peruvian ironclad Huascar. His cousin, Willie Portal, is a frequent visitor to the United States, and has many friends in this city.

EX-ATTACHE.

VIENNA'S JAGDFEST.

A CHARITY FAIR WHERE NOTHING BUT GAME WAS SOLD—A SKATING ANNIVERSARY.

Vienna, December 29.

To the great ladies of Vienna belongs the credit of having invented something entirely new and original in connection with charitable fairs and bazaars. A grand fair has just been held in the building on the Ring known as the Musikvereinsaal, where nothing but game was sold. The various stalls were decorated with all kinds of emblems of the chase, such as guns, gamebags, cartridge belts, hunting knives, etc., while the game itself was displayed in the most artistic and fanciful manner. Stags and chamois had their antlers gilt and tied up with ribbons; quails were hung in long festoons; hares, rabbits and pheasants were piled in profusion within great bowers of twined boughs. Wild boars protruded their snouts from amidst branches of fir trees, and hawks as well as foxes figured among the articles for sale. Contrary to what might have been imagined, there was not the slightest offensive odor in the immense hall from all this immense quantity of dead game, the organizers of the fair having taken the precaution to decorate the walls and the ceiling with vast quantities of branches of pine and fir, even the floor being thickly covered with pine needles, and when one entered the hall it was exactly as if treading into an immense bower of firs. The result of this was that the only perfume perceptible was the delightful and healthy odor of pine. Gamekeepers of the Emperor, of Prince Lobkowitz, of Prince Odescalchi and of several other of the great Austrian magnates, arrayed in their picturesque dress, kept watch at the doors and acted as attendants, whilst the saleswomen included the beautiful Princess Odescalchi, the French Ambassadress, Countess Kielmansegg, Countess Mongela and Princess Montenuovo, all attired in full hunting costume. The prices realized were enormous, and the fair proved so extremely successful that it is probable that it will be repeated from henceforth annually. The greater part of the game had been sent from the imperial forests at Mursted, in Styria, where the Emperor with his son-in-law, Prince Leopold of Bavaria, and Prince Francis Salvator have lately been having some fine sport. Large quantities of game, too, were contributed by the Marquis Pallavicini, Prince Leichtenstein, Prince Montenuovo and other great landowners. The chief merit of conception and organization of this novel fair belongs to the Countess Kielmansegg, wife of the Governor of Vienna, and principal rival of Princess Metternich in every social and charitable undertaking. Indeed, the war between these two great ladies is of a most amusing and, on the whole, beneficial character. Although society sometimes suffers, as it did when Countess Kielmansegg induced her husband, as Governor of the city, to forbid at the last moment the Flower Corso in the Prater, organized by Princess Metternich, yet, as stated above, the charitable institutions benefit by the fact that the two ladies are always endeavoring to outstrip one another in devising popular schemes and enterprises on behalf of the poor.

As an illustration of this, I may mention that on the very day when the profits realized by the Jagdfest, as the game fair is called here, was announced, the Archduke Rainer, attended by several other members of the Imperial family and Cabinet Ministers, inaugurated a fine new hospital for outdoor patients, erected with funds collected by Princess Metternich. The hospital is in connection with the Poliklinik. Moreover, the leading merchants and shopkeepers of the city have just presented the Princess with a beautifully illuminated address, expressive of their gratitude to her for her organization of the international dramatic and musical exhibition here last year, which attracted an immense number of strangers to the city, and consequently contributed to greatly increase the year's trade of the metropolis.

Great preparations are being made by the so-called Eislaufverein, or skating club, to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of its foundation. The affair should have taken place last year, but warm weather set in on the day fixed for the fete. This time the day chosen is January 9. If all goes well, an international contest, for which valuable prizes are offered, will be held. In the evening a grand pantomime on the ice is to take place. A formidable ice palace is being built, to form the background of the scene, in which Fridtjof and Ingeborg and the best-known figures from the Edda will appear with people from Friesland, Holland, Lapland and Iceland, as well as Esquimaux and Canadians. To preside over all these will be the god of ice, his son and his son's bride, with a retinue of several hundred snowflakes and icicles, ice dwarfs and ice fairies. White and grizzly bears will represent the time when all the world was nothing but a vast glacier. The principal parts of the pantomime are being practised with great glee by the best skaters in Vienna. It is on the ice, I may add, that the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie enjoy almost their only opportunity of coming into contact with one another.

For some time the good people of Salzburg, and especially the clergy of the place, have been much concerned by finding that each morning the great lamp of the Eternal Light that burns before the chief altar in the Cathedral of Salzburg, and which is supposed never to go out, was extinguished. Of course it was thought at first that the attendant deacons did not pour sufficient oil into the lamp, but on their innocence in the matter being satisfactorily proved, it was determined to keep a watch on the lamp through the night, in order to discover the cause for the mysterious extinction of the flame. Accordingly several of the priests concealed themselves behind the altar. Their vigil was rewarded when, toward midnight, they observed an enormous rat running along the ceiling of the vault, creeping cautiously down the rope by which the lamp is suspended and feeding on the oil. After remaining there for about ten minutes, he retreated in the same way that he had come, leaving the lamp extinguished.

PAYING A DEBT.

From The Manchester Times.

About the middle of this century there was a terrible uprising among the Yucatan Indians. For a time they were able to wreak vengeance on their white conquerors, and their ferocity and cruelty were horrible. Even so dark a page of history as this, however, is not without its story of kindness and mercy between enemies. The town of Peto was so situated in the Indian territory that it was taken by the Indians and recaptured by the whites many times. Once, when it was in the hands of its rightful owners, a number of Indian prisoners were held. Less cruel than the savages, the whites killed only in battle; they allowed their prisoners to live. But provisions became more and more scarce in Peto, and the Indians were left to die of hunger. One day Don Marcos Duarte, a wealthy inhabitant of the town, was passing the house where the Indians were, and stopped, shocked at the sight of a miserable emaciated creature. "What are you doing?" he asked. "I am eating my shoes, as you see," was the reply; "I am starving to death. For twelve days we have had almost no food. Most of my companions are dead and the days of the rest are numbered." Don Marcos looked at the miserable survivors and said: "You and they shall live," and he sent them food every day, and finally procured their freedom. Whatever were the rights of the question between Indians and whites in this case, human pity spoke first in his heart.

Some time later Peto was captured by the Indians, and the inhabitants were massacred. Don Marcos, with his wife and children, awaited death on their knees in prayer. They heard a party of savages approaching the house, and felt that the end had come. The head of the band, however, stationed sentinels around the house and gave this order: "Not a hair of the head of this man or his family is to be touched on pain of death." The family of Duarte was the only one that was spared. The Indian who had inspired the pity of Don Marcos was paying his debt. Twenty years afterward in a successful uprising the Indians sacked a number of villages and country houses. They retreated loaded with spoils and dragging with them many household servants, of whom they intended to make slaves. The chief of the expedition asked one of them what was the name of his master. "Don Marcos Duarte," he replied. The chief immediately called a halt. "How many men belong to Don Marcos?" he asked. "Twenty-four," replied the man to whom he had spoken. "Name them," said the chief. Having collected the twenty-four men, he returned to them the spoil which had come from the Duarte house, and said, "Go home, friends; you are free." It was the Indian once more paying his debt.